

T1International #insulin4all



Human Services Committee Public Hearing ***HB 6616: An Act Concerning Expansion Of Husky Health Benefits To Those Ineligible Due To Immigration Status***

February 13, 2023

To the Members of the Human Services Committee of Connecticut General Assembly:

My name is Kristen Whitney-Daniels and I am the chapter leader of the Connecticut #insulin4all chapter and also a resident of Shelton, CT.

I am writing in support of HB 6616: An Act Concerning Expansion Of Husky Health Benefits To Those Ineligible Due To Immigration Status. Expanding access to HUSKY regardless of immigration status is an important step in ensuring our immigrant community has access to the healthcare everyone needs and deserves. By extending coverage up to age 26, CT will offer healthcare to a similar age bracket as the Affordable Care Act and will provide care to a wide variety of persons including parents, workers, and students.

Connecticut #insulin4all is a group of volunteer advocates raising awareness about the insulin pricing crisis and fighting for insulin pricing transparency and affordability in Connecticut. We do not accept pharmaceutical industry funding or any funds that would compromise or influence our ability to advocate. As a group, we firmly believe that access to insulin and access to healthcare is a human right that should be afforded to all, regardless of immigration status.

In 2020, the CT General Assembly passed an Act Concerning Diabetes and High Deductible Health Plans, which acknowledged the huge financial burden of diabetes on CT residents and capped the co-pays for individuals on certain insurance plans. However, this bill did not extend to everyone, namely the uninsured and underinsured.

Currently, 58% of the roughly 113,000 undocumented immigrants in CT do not have any form of health insurance coverage (compared to 95% of the general CT population who do have healthcare)¹. That means that for a large portion of the undocumented community, this bill — and much needed financial assistance — is completely inaccessible.

¹ [Health Insurance of Total Population - Connecticut - For 2020, Kaiser Family Foundation](#)

For diabetics, having no insurance can be a death sentence. In 2019, a study of 50 pharmacies in Connecticut saw the list price for a single vial of insulin cost anywhere between \$274.00-\$446.78². Most people with diabetes require multiple vials of insulin a month and some require more than one insulin for their care. It's not surprising with those prices that out-of-pocket spending on only insulin for people with type one diabetes nearly doubled from 2012 to 2016, increasing from \$2900 to \$5700³. People with diabetes have medical expenses approximately 2.3 times higher than those who do not have diabetes⁴.

For most individuals and families without insurance, these numbers represent an unfathomable burden. Many of those who have died from rationing insulin — the potentially deadly practice of limiting one's prescribed insulin to make it last longer due to costs — did so because they were uninsured⁵.

I support H.B. 6616 and I ask the committee to support and pass this legislation out of committee in its current form — to expand HUSKY access to age 26. Though expanding access to age 26 will mark an important and crucial step, as we move forward, I hope this committee will expand access to all immigrants, regardless of age.

Sincerely,

Kristen Whitney-Daniels
Connecticut #insulin4all Chapter Leader

² [Inaccessible Insulin: The Broken Promise of Eli Lilly's Authorized Generic, Prepared by the offices of Senators Elizabeth Warren and Richard Blumenthal](#)

³ [Spending on Individuals with Type 1 Diabetes and the Role of Rapidly Increasing Insulin Prices, Health Care Cost Institute](#)

⁴ [The Burden of Diabetes in Connecticut, American Diabetes Association](#)

⁵ [In Memoriam, T1International](#)